

A Song of Mysteries.

Who shall say what snowflakes light
Falling on the lambs at night.
Clothed then in their coats of white?
Who shall say what veins of sun
Through the rose's petals run,
"Till they crimson one by one?"
This, O Love, is all our knowing:
Lambs are clad and flowers are blowing.
When the wild birds are a-wing
In the blue and bloom of spring,
Who shall say what makes them sing?
Who shall tell this heart of mine
Why in thunder and in shine
Still the murrelet hures the vine?
We but know the wild bird singeth
And the lured vine clingeth, clingeth.
Who shall say why roset dawn
Gleameth, streameth, dreameth on,
To the breast of Darkness drawn?
And why thou, by earth crossed,
Still hast sought me - loved me best,
Crept like sunlight to my breast?
Dy and dark may love and sever,
But thou lovest me forever!
—[Frank L. Stanton, in Atlanta Constitution.]

What the Kettle Sang.

BY HELEN M. WHITNEY.

The Widow Rabble was brushing her smooth black hair, and giving her niece, Dolly Hodges, a piece of her mind at the same time.

"I wonder you ain't ashamed of it, and you a church member, too!" she cried.

"But, Aunt Tabitha, what is it? What have I done?" pleaded Dolly, raising a pair of clear blue eyes to her aunt's snapping black ones.

"What have you done! You haven't primped and pucker'd, and set your cap to catch Deacon Holly—oh, no!"

In her wrath Tabitha twisted her back hair till it was the size of a hickory nut.

"Oh, aunt! how can you say such a dreadful thing?" Shy, sweet-tempered Dolly blushed with the words with a spirit akin to her aunt's. "You know it's not true."

"I know 'tis true."

The black eyes snapped again, and the widow brushed and scolded with equal energy.

"Didn't I see you run down to the gate only this morning in your blue merino dress, and your best hat, and ask the deacon to take you to town in his spring wagon? And 'tain't the first time, either."

"Why, Aunt Tabitha!" Dolly's blue eyes opened very wide, as she looked at her aunt in surprise. "You know it was no money for me to walk to town today, and we were obliged to have that trimming to finish the fluting on Mrs. Green's cashmere dress. I had been watching all the morning for a chance to ride down."

"I don't doubt it."

"I didn't know the deacon would pass—how could I? and it would have been all the same if Farmer Dabson, or old Uncle Peter Jones, had come along."

"Oh, yes, that'll do to tell," retorted the widow. "And of course it was absolutely necessary for you to run back and get a piece of bread and jam, or something, for that spoiled young one that's always stuck along with his father!"

Dolly laughed, in spite of her vexation.

"I went back for my muff," she explained, "and Freddie said he was hungry, so, of course, I brought him the bread."

"Oh, you needn't make excuses, and think I'll believe 'em. I know well enough 'twould be a good match for a poor girl like you, that has to make your own living. But Deacon Holly's too smart to be caught like that; and it's for your own good I'm warning you, Dolly Hodges. But I shall come over and speak to Sister Dorcas about it after a while, for I see there's no use talking reason to you."

"You may spare yourself the trouble, Aunt Tabitha, for my mother knows all you can tell her, already," retorted Dolly, as she drew the hood of her waterproof over her head, and walked proudly away. But there was a troubled look in her downcast eyes, and the venomous words still rankled in her bosom.

Deacon Holly felt weary and worn as he entered his lonely dwelling. The large, handsome rooms, with their costly furniture, had a dreary, desolate look that made him shiver.

The dining-room looked snug and cheerful. A bright fire blazed in the ample fire-place, and the sun streamed through the west window, brightening a pot of vivid chrysanthemums which stood on the wide sill.

Aunt Patty, the presiding genius of the housekeeping arrangements, had taken her knitting and gone out to have a chat with the next neighbor, having, however, with commendable prudence, first replenished the fire with a fresh back-log and front stick,

and hung the iron tea-kettle over it to save building a fire in the kitchen.

Aunt Patty's other preparations for tea were already made. The cold beef was sliced and set away in the safe. The apple butter was already dished in the cut-glass bowl; a mince pie was cut, and a pitcher of sweet cream stood ready for the table, which was already set, and covered with an extra cloth to protect it from the dust.

The gingerbread was sliced, and a plate of honey stood in close proximity to a loaf of brownbread, and a pot of yellow butter.

Deacon Holly was tired, and throwing himself into an easy-chair by the fire, he fell to meditating on his lonely lot.

It was three years since little Freddie's mother had been laid to rest under the daisies on the hill-side, and the deacon had never ceased to miss her.

Somehow, the more he thought of her the more attractive seemed his latest day-dream, of giving the substantial old house another mistress, and his boy a new mother. He looked down with a smile at Freddie, who had fallen asleep before the fire, with his head on a crimson ottoman.

The smile was followed by a look of perplexity as Deacon Holly leaned back in the cushioned chair, and set to work on a problem that had recently begun to puzzle him sadly. And while he puzzled, a pair of black eyes seemed to claim his attention in the foreground, while two bewildering blue ones cast shy glances at him from a distance, as if too timid to approach nearer.

The black eyes looked very attractive, the blue ones very entrancing, and the frown over the deacon's nose deepened perceptibly.

Presently a most wonderful thing occurred. An amazing thing, such as the deacon had never heard of in all his life before.

The iron tea-kettle, which had for some time been singing away quite merrily, suddenly puffed out a cloud of steam, lifted its lid, tilted itself on one side, and leered at the deacon in the most ludicrous and unaccountable manner.

The deacon could scarcely believe the evidence of his senses. He put on his spectacles and stared at the kettle in amazement.

To his intense surprise, the erratic kettle blew out another cloud of steam, tilted still farther to one side, and gave a broader stare than ever.

It then began to sing, in a boisterous tone:

"Doodle, doodle, toil and trouble,
The deacon married the Widow Rabble."
At this Deacon Holly drew himself up with an air of quiet dignity.

"I beg your pardon, Mrs. Kettle," he said, mildly. "You are laboring under a mistake. I am not married to anybody."

"Oh, yes, you are, old chap," returned the tea-kettle, saucily. "You are married to the Widow Rabble that was, and she's out in the kitchen this morn'g, jawing Aunt Patty for putting so much wood on the fire, and for having both honey and apple butter for supper."

"Dear me," sighed the deacon. "I really had no idea of such a thing. I think you are mistaken, ma'am, indeed."

"No, no, deacon, no mistake about it, I do assure you. Such things frequently happen, my dear sir, take my word for it," persisted the kettle.

"But—but it certainly cannot be a legal marriage, when it occurred without my knowledge."

"Oh, bless your heart, that makes no difference—no difference at all, my dear sir! You are in for it now, and will have to face the music. Rabble rhymes to trouble, you know. The worst of it is, the poor little boy will come in for his share of the trouble. I tell you, my blood boils to see her order that poor child around before you came home today. No wonder he's asleep a the rig this minute, and when she made him shove off all the snow from around the house, and then finish getting that load of coal into the cellar—a bitterly cold day like this, too."

The deacon groaned.

"I should think you'd know a better deacon, I really should," went on the tea-kettle. "I don't your common sense tell you that Rabble rhymes to trouble, and Dolly rhymes to Holly? What could be plainer than that? However, it's too late now, and here's the new madam at her tricks already. Look at her now, a-grubbing that poor child by the scruff of the neck, and bustling him into the kitchen, just because he won't sleep on the floor."

"I won't stand it," cried the deacon, jumping up.

"I'm so glad you're awake, deacon," said Aunt Patty's mild voice. "I've waited half an hour for you to wake

up, and I'm dreadful afraid the tea is spoiled, standing so long."

The deacon rubbed his eyes and stared at Aunt Patty, at the cozy table, at the merry blazing fire, and then at the iron tea-kettle.

It hung demurely from its hook over the ruddy blaze, singing in low, subdued tones, unlike the boisterous way in which it had so recently been indulging.

A weight seemed taken from the deacon's heart, his spirits rose. He was not married, after all!

"Where's Freddie?" he asked, as he took his seat at the table and sipped his tea.

"Oh, the poor child was so hungry I gave him his supper long ago, and he's gone off somewhere, I don't know where."

The deacon finished his supper with a good appetite and a light heart.

The Widow Rabble made quite an attractive appearance in her wine-colored merino dress, with her black hair smooth and shining, and her cheeks a little, just a little redder than nature had made them, her black eyes as black as ever.

"Must you go? Do stay longer," she was saying, politely, to her friend and cousin, Miss Miranda Peck, who had run in for a half-hour's gossip.

"Oh, dear, no. I must go at once," returned the visitor.

"But I must say," she added, as her hostess accompanied her to the door, "I should think that boy would be an objection."

"Oh, not at all." The door was open, now, and the widow's voice was high and shrill. "Freddie is old enough to be of some assistance now, and I should put him to work at once. He has been spoiled all his life, I know, but I would soon put a stop to all that."

"Good evening, ladies."

The words proceeded from a tall form which loomed up in the darkness, unperceived before.

Both ladies uttered little shrieks of surprise.

"Dear me, Deacon Holly! I did not see you in the dark. Do walk in."

Mrs. Rabble gave her friend a terrified pinch, which the conscience-stricken Miss Peck returned with interest.

"Do come in, deacon," persisted the widow, determined to bridge matters over, if possible.

"Not tonight, thanks, Mrs. Rabble," returned the deacon, politely, but coldly. "My boy, Freddie, has run off, and I called to see if he was here."

"The dear child! He isn't here, deacon; but come in, and I will send out to look for him. He can't be far away."

"Oh, I couldn't think of troubling you. He has probably run over to see his friend, Miss Dolly Hodges. I'll just run over and look him up myself. Don't let me detain you, ladies."

And the deacon walked off.

Dolly's blue eyes dropped a little, and the color deepened on her rounded cheeks as the deacon entered and discovered Freddie sitting in her lap, making himself quite at home, pulling her curls and her blue ribbon bow.

When, a short time thereafter, pretty Dolly Hodges became Mrs. Deacon Holly, the disgraced widow informed her friend Miss Peck, in confidence, that it all came of Dolly's making so much of that spoiled young one.

Unconscious Mrs. Rabble! She never suspected that her fate had been influenced by what the old iron tea-kettle sang.—[New York Weekly.]

CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

WHO LIKES THE RAIN.

"I," said the duck, "I call it fun. For I have my little red rubbers on; they make a cunning three-toed track in the soft, cool mud. Thank you!"

"I," cried the dandelion, "I! My roots are thirsty, my buds are dry." And she lifted her little yellow head out of her green grassy bed.

"I hope 'twill pour! I hope 'twill pour!" Croaked the toad at his gray bark door, "For with a broad leaf for a roof, I am perfectly weather-proof."

Sang the brook: "I laugh at every drop! And wish they never need to stop. Till a big river I grow to be, And could find my way to the sea?"

—[Youth's Banner.]

HOW TO MAKE A PIE.

Take a good sized fresh lemon. Let the end where the stem was represent the snout. With a sharp penknife raise two little pointed pieces of rind about half an inch long, a suitable distance from the snout, to represent the ears. Get six matches having dark ends: break off two of them, leaving the sulphur ends about an inch long; sharpen them and stick them in for eyes, leaving, of course, the dark ends on the surface. Stick the remaining four in the body for legs, taking care to put them in proper places, enabling piggy to stand alone. The pointed end of the lemon forms a cute little tail. When you get tired of playing with him you can kill and eat him, provided you are careful not to put sulphur into his body. The effect of the little fellow finished is so comical that one presented suddenly in view in school one afternoon came near upsetting the gravity of both teacher and pupils.—[New York Advertiser.]

BETTER BEES.

A Proposed New Departure in Bee Culture.

An Expert Says the Insect can Be Improved by Breeding.

J. Edward Giles, in writing on the desirability of producing a larger race of bees, proposes to cross our present race of bees with the giant bees of India, and obtain a race with long proboscis and perhaps increased size (if that should be found to be of any advantage). This improved race should be crossed with the South American stingless bee, and thus a race would be secured with all the good points of the Italian bee, with lengthened proboscis and stings; such a bee, in fact, as it would be difficult to improve. It might be found desirable to breed on the swarming instinct, for there appears to be no reason why it cannot be bred out of bees as thoroughly as the stinging instinct has been bred out of certain races of domestic fowls. But now that swarming can be so completely controlled by the use of queen traps and automatic hives, this is a point of minor importance.

Mr. Giles is of opinion that the improvement of our bees is of sufficient importance, and the prospect of success sufficiently great, to justify the Agricultural Department of the United States in undertaking the cost of the necessary experiments. The cost to the Government would be trifling in comparison with the benefits that would accrue if the experiments were successful. Few individuals who are competent to do the work would have the means to carry it out at their own expense, because the study of the habits of the stingless bees in their native country would necessarily entail a residence of a few years in South America.

Mr. Giles quotes the honey crop for 1879 as twenty-five million pounds, or about half a pound for the year by each inhabitant of the United States. At an average of ten cents per pound the value of the honey crop for that year would be about \$25,000,000, not reckoning the value of the 2,229,000 pounds of wax, the amount that would be secreted in the production of the quantity of honey named.

If we had a race of stingless bees there is good reason to believe that the value of the crop would soon be doubled, for many would be induced to go into the business of bee-keeping who are now deterred by fear of the stings, or who live in thickly settled villages and hesitate to keep bees for fear their neighbors will consider their pets a nuisance.

Ever in the oldest and most thickly settled states the number of bees could easily be doubled without exhausting the honey supply, and there is practically no limit to the amount of honey which could be produced by planting special crops in suitable places.

Mr. Giles differs from those who think that an increased supply of honey would lower the price and glut the market, as experience shows that as the supply of any article of food increases, the demand always grows. As an illustration, he quotes the case of a farmer with whom he compared notes on the price of farm produce. The farmer was at the time preparing a load of tomatoes for market, and he remarked that it was easier to sell a wagon load of tomatoes now than it was to sell a peck when he first began to raise them.

The reason it is difficult to sell honey is that people have not learned to use it. When its many wholesome qualities are understood it will take a prominent place as a daily food, and nothing will bring this about more quickly than the proposed new departure in bee culture.

The Wealth of the Osage Indians.

L. A. Wimsor, an old settler of Gray Horse and Dr. B. Bird of Eschscholtz, I. T., are at the head of Mr. Wimsor and Dr. Bird are both noted traders, this part of the nation being known as the Osage agency, representing the big and little Osage and the Kansas or Kaw Indians. Mr. Wimsor has been among the Osages for fifteen years, the first seven of which he was Government clerk, and since that time he has been a post trader.

"The Osages," he said, "are the richest per capita, I think, of any tribe of Indians in the Indian Territory. They have a reservation of 1,500,000 acres, and receive about \$250 each a year from the Government. The Osages at one time owned the east of Southern Kansas, but made a treaty with the government about 1854, and received a large sum from the sale of their lands,

A Painful Decoration.

A good anecdote is told of M. Carnot, the president of France, who is about to visit Savoy. As usual, he will take with him a collection of decorations and other distinctions for distribution among the notables of the towns he will pass through. The president of the Republic, in order to enhance the value of the decorations, is accustomed to pin it himself on the breast of the happy recipient.

On his last provincial tour it appears that he made a mess of the operation. A statue had just been unveiled and the customary speeches delivered when the persons to be decorated were invited to get on to the platform. Among them was a fat farmer to whom the Academic Pains were allotted. M. Carnot approached him and proceeded to pin the blue ribbon on his breast, but whether the pin was blunt or the cloth of the farmer's coat hard, he found the task difficult. However, at length he succeeded, but judge of his surprise on seeing the farmer trembling and as pale as a ghost. He at first thought it was simply a slow, but the farmer getting worse, General Brugere advanced and found that the pin had stuck in his breast, and that he was bleeding freely. To extract it was of course the work of a second, and the farmer recovered, but it will be a long time before he forgets the first day he wore his decoration.—[London Globe.]

Blind Hymn Writer.

The oldest and best known hymn writer now living is a blind woman, Fanny Crosby of Park Avenue, the city. Her hymns, "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour," "Rescue the Perishing," "Saviour, More Than Life to Me" and "Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross," are known and sung wherever the English language is spoken, and, although blind from infancy, she has composed more than 300 others. She is now sixty-five years of age, and before she made hymn writing her life work was for many years a teacher of the blind. All of her poetical efforts are dictated to a secretary, and so faithful is her memory that she often composes a dozen or more hymns before she dictates them to her assistant. Her disposition is a sunny, beneficent one, and her home is the abiding place of cheerfulness and contentment.—[New York Herald.]

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"I had just left college, my health was bad, and I concluded to go out West and rough it for a few months. I engaged to help drive a herd of cattle from northern Texas into Kansas, and made the usual mistake of supposing that I was the only man in the party who knew a very little from a personal experience. For three successive evenings I attended my college learning while my companions sat in a circle around me and chewed tough beef or smoked plug tobacco. Then they concluded that they had about enough of Aristophanes, Pethingons, and the philosophy of the Peripatetics, and they proceeded to what we call the next morning the boss gave me my orders in Greek, the cook asked me in choice Latin whether I would take soap or syrup on my sapsucker, and a cow-sucker with a big revolver sticking out of his booting bossing me in Persian to reserve my kindergarten learning for the babes of civilization. One had been a professor in Yale and the others were Oxoniens. I have not since attempted to dabble the simple children of the frontier with a display of my learning."—[St. Louis Globe-Democrat.]

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